

Use of Force Committee Meeting 15 January, 2015

Prepared by: Jason Williams, Training Coordinator

Members Present: Sheriff Donald Keeler, Captain Drew Bloom, Sergeant Bart Chamberlain, Sergeant John Young, Chief Christopher Brickell, Corporal Michael Akerlind, Chief Lianne Tuomey, Officer Scott Fisher, Lieutenant Robin Hollwedel, Warden Russell Shopland, Sergeant Matthew Murano, Sergeant George Crowe

Other persons present: Warden Dale Whitlock

Academy Representatives: Training Coordinator Jason Williams

Members Absent: Lieutenant Michael Henry

Meeting called to order: 10:05

Old Business

ISSUE 1: Update on the progress on the proposed shotgun qualification course recommendation to the Council

- Warden Shopland and Lieutenant Hollwedel indicated that they have made some progress on the development of a course of fire for shotguns. Copies of the courses for both slug and buckshot were distributed to the members. Lieutenant Hollwedel told the members that some departments use slugs exclusively and some use buckshot exclusively; therefore the option would be available for the user to qualify with that type of ammunition only. The course was limited to 25 yards as well to accommodate the average range size available to departments. Lieutenant Hollwedel asked the members if it might be necessary for them to develop a qualification course for less-than-lethal shotgun munitions as well. A lengthy



discussion ensued around this topic and ultimately it was decided that the subcommittee members would conduct some research into the manufacturer guidelines for those munitions and would report back to the Committee at the next meeting. Sergeant Young mentioned adding “safety circle” as an option on the course, and Lieutenant Hollwedel indicated that there would be an option for which ready position a shooter chose to use. The subcommittee will continue with their efforts in the development of this course and will report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

- **No action taken**

ISSUE 2: Patrol rifle certification course

- T.C. Williams informed the Committee members that progress is being made on the patrol rifle end user course and that a classroom presentation, a manual, and skill development and qualification courses of fire should be finalized and ready for Committee review by the next meeting. T.C. Williams asked about any qualification courses that Committee member’s departments are currently using to be forwarded to him.

- **No action taken**

ISSUE 3: Expired Instructors

- T.C. Williams reopened discussion on a matter that was raised by Sergeant Crowe at the 13 November, 2013 meeting and subsequently tabled regarding a standardized method of determining what the Committee’s recommendations would be regarding expired instructors. It was mentioned that this discussion has been raised numerous times and that there should be a standard recommendation for all persons based on the length of time that they have been expired.

Lieutenant Hollwedel entered a motion that if an instructor misses one refresher and subsequently expires, that instructor must attend week two of the firearms instructor course to recertify. If an instructor misses two refreshers, that instructor must successfully complete the entrance testing for the firearms instructor course and must complete the entire course again.

Sergeant Crowe seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

ISSUE 1: Part time certification process and TASER update

- Sheriff Keeler brought up the issue that there has been much discussion about the proposed new part time certification process and discussions that he has had in the law enforcement community. A lengthy discussion ensued and Chief Brickell offered an overview of the discussions being had in the Training Advisory Committee regarding the part time process. Mention was also made of discussions in the Legislature regarding the use of Conducted Energy Weapons (CEW). It was mentioned that the Use of Force Committee has not been consulted regarding the use of the CEW; however Captain Bloom mentioned that he has spoken to the Legislature on numerous occasions regarding the CEW but only as a representative of the law enforcement community and not specifically as a representative of the Use of Force Committee.

Lieutenant Hollwedel entered a motion that the Committee recognizes Captain Bloom as a representative of the Committee's voice on all matters regarding the CEW in all forums which he attends.

Officer Fisher seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

ISSUE 2: Part Time firearms syllabus

- T.C. Williams presented the syllabus that had been created for the part time basic training class firearms program for review and adoption. Sheriff Keeler suggested that the firearms process for the part time basic class be changed, and that there should be a requirement that part time candidates come to the part time academy pre trained and pre qualified with their firearm. T.C. Williams mentioned that this idea has been raised in the past, and that neither the Executive Director nor the Assistant Director's have been receptive to the idea. Warden Shopland asked if there had been malfunction drills added into the training program. T.C. Williams stated that there were not as the program had been geared specifically towards building the skills necessary to pass the Council's handgun qualification course, and malfunctions are not included in that course. Chief Tuomey suggested that malfunction drills be added to the pre part time academy proficiency check sheet.

Chief Tuomey entered a motion that the syllabus be accepted for incorporation into the part time academy firearms training program as written.

Lieutenant Hollwedel seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

ISSUE 3: Range rule revision

- T.C. Williams mentioned that there is no range rule currently that requires persons using on the range during live fire wear any sort of ballistic vest. In the unfortunate event that a person is accidentally struck by a round on the range, subsequent investigation might question why this safety concern was not addressed previously. T.C. Williams asked the Committee for a recommendation for a change of the range safety rules. A discussion ensued.

Chief Tuomey entered a motion that the range rules will be revised to reflect that all persons, including instructors, students, and observers, will be required to wear approved ballistic vest protection within the fenced area of the outdoor range, or while inside of the indoor range, when the range is open for the purpose of live fire exercises.

Officer Fisher seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

ISSUE 4: Michael Roj: expired instructor status

- T.C. Williams noted that he has been contacted by Michael Roj, currently of the Windham County Sheriff's Department and formerly of the Vermont State Police, to see about recertifying as a firearms instructor. Deputy Roj stated that he was unable to attend the 2013 refreshers for reasons unspecified. With the new standards for recertifying expired instructors discussed in issue 3 under old business, Deputy Roj will be required to attend and complete week 2 of the firearms instructor course to be recertified.

No action taken.

ISSUE 5: Use of Force and Tactics Instructor entrance requirements

- T.C. Williams noted that there are currently no regulations in place regarding who is and who is not eligible to attend the Use of Force and Tactics Instructor Certification Course. Recently there have been agencies that have sent instructor candidates to the course who have not attended the basic user course. Currently there are prerequisite requirements for those wishing to attend the firearms instructor school. Captain Bloom stated that there has generally been a system in place to identify those candidates who are having trouble successfully completing the instructor

school, and those persons are either not issued instructor certification or they are given a training plan to complete the course. Captain Bloom would like any standards that are put into place for the Use of Force and Tactics Instructor Course to be in place for the Ground Fighting Instructor course also. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Lieutenant Hollwedel entered a motion that the entry standards to the Use of Force and Tactics Instructor Course and the Ground Fighting Instructor Course be similar to those of the Firearms instructor course, which would require that an officer be a full time certified law enforcement officer with 2 years of consecutive experience, a full time certified correctional officer with two years of consecutive experience, or a part time certified officer with four years of consecutive experience.

Chief Tuomey seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

ISSUE 6: Committee member resignation

- Sergeant Chamberlain notified the Committee that he has recently been moved to the overnight patrol shift for his department, and believes that he is no longer able to maintain his commitment to the Committee, and thus he has tendered his resignation.

Sheriff Keeler entered a motion to accept Sergeant Chamberlain's resignation with regret.

Lieutenant Hollwedel seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:25

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Williams
Training Coordinator
Vermont Police Academy